

# ENERGIZE INDIANA

Transforming the Hoosier Economy

## Workforce development

### Modern system will mean more efficient services

Hoosier workers and employers will benefit when the Indiana Department of Workforce Development modernizes its computer system.

House Enrolled Act 1001 provided \$39.2 million to modernize the state's unemployment insurance system. The system, built in 1989, uses an outdated programming language that will no longer be supported after July, with maintenance ending in March 2004.

Under the new system, employers will be able to use the Internet to conduct business with the department 24 hours a day, reducing postage costs and expediting the receipt of information. A study has shown that the new system could save employers \$36.4 million a year.

The new system will automatically generate reminders to employers as required and employ electronic communication whenever possible.

Workers also will benefit. They'll get their checks faster and Workforce Development staff will be able to handle more claims than before.

In addition, the modernization will allow workers to conduct more business online. The system now allows claimants to file continued claims over the Internet. Modernization will allow them also to file initial claims; check the status and tracking of their unemployment check; file an appeal; present evidence for an appeal; and download forms and manuals.

What's more, the new system will be more secure, protecting highly sensitive information provided by both employer and worker; and reducing the opportunity for fraud and overpayment of benefits.

### JOBS: Energize Indiana provides a goal – and a means

At least 30,000 workers and unemployed Hoosiers will have their skills assessed and 1,800 job categories at Indiana companies will be profiled – with the goal of matching them up – under the Energize Indiana economic-development plan.

Energize Indiana was contained in House Enrolled Act 1001, which was passed by the General Assembly in April and signed into law May 8 by Governor Frank O'Bannon. The measure appropriated \$25 million in federal money over five years to help Hoosier workers.

Energize Indiana, which focuses on four industry sectors – the life sciences, advanced manufacturing, information technology and high-tech distribution – was conceived by O'Bannon and Lieutenant Governor Joe Kernan as a job-creation plan, and its many components address that goal in various ways. But perhaps the most direct way is through the Indiana Department of Workforce Development, which will use federal money provided by the Reed Act to undertake several activities that ultimately will put more Hoosiers to work.

For its JOBS – Job Opportunities Business Services – program, the Department of Workforce Development will use ACT's WorkKeys system to conduct the skills' assessment and job profiling. Job profilers will meet with experts from targeted companies to determine what skills are needed for a particular occupation.

Job seekers are then tested to determine their skill level and matched with the job profiles to find the best position available.

Workforce Development also is assembling teams of highly trained state merit employees to concentrate on the four targeted industries. Because these teams will be very knowledgeable about their specific fields, they will be capable of efficiently recognizing the skills needed for occupations and be able to quickly match workers to those jobs.

In addition, the department plans to hold more job fairs than usual, including some at post-secondary schools, to attract workers to the targeted sectors. Jobs fairs will first focus on Hoosiers workers but, if the worker demand cannot be met locally, the fairs will go national. The department plans an aggressive marketing campaign, advertising the job fairs on radio, in magazines, by direct mail and on Internet job-posting sites.

### Contact:

Brett Wineinger, director  
Advance Indiana  
317-233-5514  
[bwineinger@dwd.state.in.us](mailto:bwineinger@dwd.state.in.us)

For more information... [www.workforce.IN.gov](http://www.workforce.IN.gov)